

**SPECIAL MEETING  
MAY 8, 2013**

The Wethersfield Town Council held a meeting on Wednesday, May 8 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 505 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield.

Present: Councilors Drake, Hurley, Kotkin, Manousos, McAlister, Montinieri, Roberts, Deputy Mayor Console, and Chairperson Hemmann.

Also present: Jeff Bridges, Town Manager, RaeAnn Palmer, Assistant Town Manager and Dolores G. Sassano, Town Clerk.

Councilor Kotkin led the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Mayor Hemmann announced that they are here to talk about the budget and invited Mr. Bridges to the podium to present his items.

Mr. Bridges provided a master spreadsheet for the public to view and explained the numbers on the spreadsheet. Mr. Bridges presented a spreadsheet that showed all the revenue changes that have taken place since the Town Manager's budget was presented to the Council. Mr. Bridges explained the LOCIP money issues and its effect on the mill levy and the revenue stream.

The Councilors and Mayor Hemmann asked questions regarding the road funding.

Mr. Bridges next explained some proposed add-on's to the budget which included \$2,000.00 to the Town Manager's budget for additional travel and training in the Town Manager's office. He explained they are also adding some money to the Police Department budget in anticipation of the School Resource Officer grant for the middle school as we are responsible for 25% of the cost for a partial year for that person. Mr. Bridges explained some other Library budget changes as well as some insurance changes that are shared with the Board of Education.

Mr. Bridges next explained the series of seven motions the Council will have to make individually for the CNEF road budget, total Library budget, school budget, the tax levy, the mill levy and so on and that the Council will adopt those individually for the budget for next year. Mr. Bridges also explained the series of change motions that the Council has to adopt which are modifications to the Town Manager's budget and stated that it's a process that Wethersfield follows. Details of the changes are outlined below.

Discussion ensued regarding paving of the Webb School parking lot and the Webb tennis courts.

Mayor Hemmann asked Councilor Manousos to explain the Budget and Finance process of review.

Councilor Manousos explained the Budget and Finance process.

### COUNCIL ACTION

Councilor Manousos moved to “RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 1, 2013 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS TO INCREASE THE CIRMA EQUITY DISTRIBUTION REVENUE ACCOUNT BY \$40,689 (Account #48924)”, seconded by Deputy Mayor Console.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Manousos moved to “RESOLVED THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 1, 2013 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS TO INCREASE THE TOWN MANAGER’S TRAVEL TRAINING AND DUES ACCOUNT BY \$2,000 (Account 11202-52212)”, seconded by Councilor Hurley.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Manousos moved to “RESOLVED THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 1, 2013 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS TO INCREASE THE POLICE DEPARTMENT PAYROLL ACCOUNT BY \$12,250 FOR THE GRANT MATCH FOR A SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER (Account 14202 50001), seconded by Deputy Mayor Console.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Manousos moved to “RESOLVED THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 1, 2013 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS TO DECREASE THE LIBRARY HEALTH INSURANCE ACCOUNT BY \$5,000 (Accounts 17001, 17002, 17003, 17004, 17005, 51101), seconded by Commissioner Hurley.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Manousos moved to “RESOLVED THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 1, 2013 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS TO DECREASE THE EDUCATION BUDGET BY \$33,075 FOR ADDITIONAL INSURANCE SAVINGS (Account 19900 52225), seconded by Deputy Mayor Console.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Manousos moved to “RESOLVED THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 1, 2013 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS TO DECREASE THE RETIREE MEDICAL BENEFIT ACCOUNT BY \$13,250 (Account 19600 58299), seconded by Deputy Mayor Console.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Manousos moved to “RESOLVED THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 1, 2013 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS TO DECREASE THE LO-CIP REVENUE IN THE CNEF ROAD FUND BY \$218,379, seconded by Councilor McAlister.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Manousos moved to “RESOLVED THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 1, 2013 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS TO INCREASE THE PEQUOT REVENUE BY \$109,000 (Account 42610), seconded by Deputy Mayor Console.

Councilor Kotkin questioned if this was a reasonable number given what’s been going on in appropriations. Mr. Bridges responded the number in the Appropriations is larger.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Manousos moved to “RESOLVED THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 1, 2013 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS TO INCREASE THE PILOT FOR STATE OWNED PROPERTY REVENUE BY \$109,000 (Account 42501), seconded by Deputy Mayor Console.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0

Councilor Manousos moved to “RESOLVED THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 1, 2013 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS TO ELIMINATE THE FUNDING FOR REDOING THE TENNIS COURTS AT WEBB AND REPLACE THAT WITH PAVING THE REMAINDER OF THE WEBB PARKING LOT THIS YEAR, seconded by Councilor Hurley.

Councilor Manousos suggested putting the money toward paving the Webb parking lot in lieu of redoing the tennis courts. A discussion then ensued amongst the Councilors.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion failed 2-7-0. Councilors Hurley and Manousos voting Yes. Councilors Drake, Kotkin, McAlister, Montinieri, Roberts, Deputy Mayor Console and Mayor Hemmann voting No.

Councilor Drake asked Mr. Bridges to further explain the 4.67% road transfer amount listed on the spreadsheet. Mr. Bridges explained that the general fund plus roads total increase is 2.9%.

Councilor Kotkin asked Mr. Bridges what if any adjustments or changes were in personnel

whether it's in the Police Department or anywhere else in Town in the coming budget vs. the budget that we are operating under today. Mr. Bridges explained that there will be a retirement in the Social and Youth Services Department and there will be a vacancy in the Nature Center budget and they have combined the Director in the Nature Center along with the Services Coordinator into what's called a Youth Program Manager which oversees the programs at the Nature Center and the non-counseling function of a Youth Services position. It will be more of a program manager than a direct service provider. He stated they have also backfilled not in the town budget, but in the Nature Center's own revenue stream a part-timer there to handle more of the maintenance and exhibits support tasks like feeding the snake at the Nature Center. He stated that we have also restored a Zoning Enforcement Officer in the Building Department at part-time. He stated we are netting a full-time position gone but, overall the reduction of FTE's on the Town side is down 1. Councilor Roberts raised concerns about the budget process being entirely managed and orchestrated by the Budget and Finance Committee and the lack of meetings to include department heads. A discussion then ensued amongst the Councilors regarding the budget process. Councilor Montinieri suggested that after this budget is done to go back and take a look at what happened because he is concerned about the communication issues with the Board.

Mayor Hemmann asked Councilor Manousos to explain the budget process.

Councilor Manousos explained that the process was that we started with this year's budget which was \$51,614,000 and we worked through what the increases were off of that as a base that we would have seen and that came from communication from the Board, the Town Manager, Budget and Finance and those Councilors that were interested in participating. Councilor Manousos explained that those increases were a little over \$2,000,000 which included things like contractual increases from union contract negotiations, Special Education and magnet tuition which was up very much, transportation increases, the OPEB contribution for post-employment benefits, supplies, replacement equipment (instructional and non-instructional), professional services, other maintenance and property services that were in the Superintendent's budget from our second to last meeting at the library, some building improvements and we also included inflationary adjustment on some of these items that weren't covered under there. Councilor Manousos explained that then they worked methodically on decreases--what was going to be different from this current year. He stated that we knew health was going to be down substantially in a couple different areas, heat energy, electricity and there were adjustments made to new instructional equipment and non-instructional and we talked about those items that we had trouble reconciling which was, in part, due to the start-up costs for all-day kindergarten and some savings on reducing personal days from 12 to 5. Councilor Manousos explained that there were some unanticipated retirement savings that we took but which we later just zeroed out because through discussions tonight we had understood that those were already incorporated into the numbers. He explained that got us to our current services budget and then we added in all the initiatives that were brought up at the Council meeting where the Board presented and that included some band uniforms, some seed money, Security Director position, the SRBI tutor, the K-12 Math Supervisor and benefits on those positions above, some additional insurance for the Math Supervisor, some new equipment and technology improvements which were 100 Ipads, 125

laptops, and some new classroom furniture for two classrooms which was something that the Board of Education does every year. Councilor Manousos explained that at the end of the day that kind of drove the number in a methodical way and we got to a number that we thought was reasonable which we make a motion on. Councilors knew of all the Budget and Finance Committee meetings and could have come to any or all of these meetings.

Councilor Drake asked Councilor Manousos if he could put up the budget worksheet for everyone to see.

Councilor Manousos presented the information on the budget worksheet to the public. A discussion then ensued regarding budget process.

Councilor Manousos motioned **“THAT THE TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE CAPITAL AND NONRECURRING ROAD FUND BE SET AT \$607,772 FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2013,** seconded by Councilor Hurley.

Councilor Kotkin asked if the amount that we would be getting from the State is the difference between \$1.2 million and \$607,772. Mr. Bridges explained the budget worksheet and confirmed that is correct.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Hurley motioned **“THAT THE TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR LIBRARY PURPOSES BE SET AT \$1,802,975 FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2013”** seconded by Councilor Drake.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Manousos motioned **“THAT THE TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR SCHOOL PURPOSES BE SET AT \$53,123,059 FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2013”** seconded by Councilor McAlister.

Councilor Kotkin commented that he feels that the Board did a very good job on their budget this year and added that the health care costs are going down significantly and that gives us an opportunity to actually initiate some new efforts to upgrade both the technology and the facilities that our kids go to school in, not referencing the high school which has a major renovation underway. Councilor Kotkin commented that to him, the \$300,000 cut is excessive and cannot support it.

Councilor Manousos commented that he and Councilors McAlister and Hurley all have children in the system and wouldn't do anything that we thought would harm our own kids' education and that's why he completely supports this and believes that they had a very methodical process that makes sense and it keeps current services and technology, which is important and all the things that we talked about already.

Councilor Drake commented that if it wasn't for the health insurance savings, this budget would be \$4.8 percent increase which he thinks is a pretty hefty increase. He stated that based on Councilor Manousos' analysis, 95% of the numbers came from the Board's budget. This 5% you can argue over if we added 2% increase to and stated that he thinks these numbers are pretty good. He stated that a 4.6% increase is a pretty good increase and I don't think we are cheating anything to anybody. Councilor Drake commented that we gave and put in everything that they asked for and believes that it's a good budget right now.

Councilor McAlister commented that he believes the process that was followed was pretty transparent in understanding what assumptions we made whether we agree with the assumptions or not. He stated that he might not necessarily agree with all of them himself and it's probably a little bit more than he would want to cut, but looks at this number as not undoable from a Board side in terms of a half of a percent of their total budget. Councilor McAlister stated that's not something that you can't overcome and added that he would support this one because he thinks it's going to get worse from here if we don't.

The motion failed. 3-6-0 with Councilors Drake, Hurley, Kotkin, Montinieri, Roberts and Deputy Mayor Console voting No.

Councilor Hurley motioned **"THAT THE TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR SCHOOL PURPOSES BE SET AT \$53,023,059 FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2013"** seconded by Councilor Drake. VOTE: 3-6-0. The motion failed with Councilors Kotkin, Manousos, Montinieri, Roberts, Deputy Mayor Console and Chairperson Hemmann voted No.

Councilor Drake motioned **"THAT THE TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR SCHOOL PURPOSES BE SET AT \$53,123,058 FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2013"** seconded by Councilor McAlister. The motion failed. VOTE: 4-5-0 with Councilors Hurley, Kotkin, Montinieri, Roberts and Deputy Mayor Console voted No.

Councilor Hurley motioned **"THAT THE TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR SCHOOL PURPOSES BE SET AT \$53,073,058 FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2013"** seconded by Councilor McAlister. The motion failed. VOTE: 4-5-0 with Councilors Kotkin, Manousos, Montinieri, Roberts and Deputy Mayor Console voted No.

Councilor Manousos motioned **"FOR A 10-MINUTE RECESS"**, seconded by Councilor McAlister.

Councilor Hurley final motion as amended **"THAT THE TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR SCHOOL PURPOSES BE SET AT \$53,098,059 FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2013"** seconded by Councilor McAlister. The motion passed. VOTE: 5-4-0 with Councilors Kotkin, Montinieri, Roberts and Deputy Mayor Console Voted No.

Councilor Hurley **“THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL ADOPT THE TOWN BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER ON APRIL 1, 2013 AND AS AMENDED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL, IN THE SUM OF \$89,473,624 FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2013”** seconded by Councilor Manousos. VOTE: 5-4-0 with Councilors Kotkin, Montinieri, Roberts and Deputy Mayor Console Voted No.

Councilor Manousos motioned **“THAT THE TOTAL AMOUNT TO BE RAISED BY TAXES FOR THE TOWN, LIBRARY, SCHOOL AND CAPITAL AND NONRECURRING ROAD FUND PURPOSES COMBINED BE SET AT \$77,704,935 FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2013”** seconded by Councilor Hurley. VOTE: 5-4-0 with Councilors Kotkin, Montinieri, Roberts and Deputy Mayor Voted No.

Councilor Hurley motioned **“THAT THE GENERAL FUND TAX RATE ON ALL REAL AND PERSONAL TAXABLE PROPERTY BE SET AT 33.19 MILLS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2013”** seconded by Councilor McAlister. VOTE: 5-4-0 with Councilors Kotkin, Montinieri, Roberts and Deputy Mayor Console Voted No.

Councilor Manousos motioned **“THAT THE CAPITAL AND NON RECURRING ROADS FUND TAX RATE ON ALL REAL AND PERSONAL TAXABLE PROPERTY BE SET AT .27 MILLS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2013”** seconded by Councilor McAlister. VOTE: 9-0-0.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

At 9:25 p.m., Councilor Hurley moved **"TO ADJOURN THE MEETING"** seconded by Deputy Mayor Console. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Dolores G. Sassano  
Town Clerk

Approved by Vote of Council  
May 20, 2013